



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Minutes 01/19/2011

Tree Committee MEETING MINUTES 1/19/2011

Present: Sally Naish, Eliza Burden, Andrew Fischer, Walter Phillips, Clarissa Rowe, Corinna Vanderspek, Greg Watt
Prepared by: Walter Phillips

Planning for 2011 Tree-Planting Season

Jimmy Dodge was unable to attend the meeting, so the Committee was unable to obtain information about the number of tree requests that have been received, the number of trees the Town plans to purchase, or if / how the Town plans to plant the trees purchased. The Committee decided to estimate that 100 trees would be purchased and planted. Sally Naish reported on the cost of various bare root tree species that the Town might purchase. After some discussion, the Committee selected 5 species to suggest that the Tree Warden purchase: equal numbers of Princeton Elm, Hawthorn, and Red Maple, and 10 Ginkgo and 10 Tupelo trees of appropriate varieties. We would plan to monitor the trees planted and see how well these species survived. The cost of these would be between about \$60 and \$80 each for 1.5" caliper trees, and the estimated cost to plant each about \$80. Trees will be ordered in early February. It is not clear if the Town will have funds or personnel available to plant some or all of the trees, or if there are funds available to contract the work. There was discussion about spending some Trees Please money to buy trees and to plant trees. The consensus was not to use Trees Please funds to pay for planting trees. The Committee did not want to be responsible for planting trees, but several ideas were presented about whom might be enlisted to plant trees: organizations, schools with appropriate programs (Minuteman Tech, Arlington High), residents. Greg Watt will investigate. Committee members will write an article for the Advocate asking for volunteers willing to be trained, and then they could plant trees. Does the Town have a list of where trees will be planted? Could the Committee make a list of preferred locations? What priorities would be considered? Currently trees are unevenly distributed among various areas of the Town; is this a situation that we might try to address? The Lexington Tree Management Manual provides a list of priorities used there (page 11).

Discussion about how to provide training for planting and watering the trees: a demonstration put on by the Tree Committee, possibly on April 2; a video that we might make; existing videos on YouTube; use of the Lexington Tree Management Manual.

Website

Progress on the website has fallen behind the sub-committee's initial ambitious goals, but work is proceeding. Alan Jones is working with the sub-committee. A template has been established, and information is being added to the various pages. A sign-up sheet was circulated for volunteers to contribute information for various sections of the website.

Tree Hearing Process

Report of three Committee members who attended a tree hearing for removal of a Norway Maple in front of 63-65 Windsor Street. Developer wants to cut down the tree to make way for a planned driveway. Discussion about whether the Committee itself could formally object to a tree removal at a tree hearing, and about how the Committee might encourage developers to preserve existing mature trees on property to be developed. It was decided that a first step in that direction would be to draft a letter requesting tree preservation. The building inspector could hand out the letter to developers when they submit plans for a proposed project.

Discussion about the feasibility of a warrant article that would establish a by-law to regulate the removal of mature trees in front of property to be developed. Not enough time to consider such for this year's TM.

Mission and Goals

Final wording was voted and approved as follows:

Mission Statement:

The Arlington Tree Committee serves to promote the protection, planting, and care of trees in Arlington.

Current Objectives:

- Increase the number of site-appropriate public trees
- Promote community awareness of trees and their benefits

- Provide a website about trees and related Town services.
- Provide training in tree selection, planting, and care
- Develop a list of recommended trees
- Raise funds to support the Tree Committee's mission
- Explore the feasibility of a town-wide tree inventory.

Other items

Corinna Vanderspek initiated discussion of possible Town involvement in "off-berm" tree planting on private property. Some legal questions may need to be addressed. The Lexington Manual (pp 11-12) provides an outline of the process used in Lexington.

Andrew Fischer presented an amendment to Massachusetts Law, Sections 26 and 27 of Chapter 149. This amendment is intended to require that all workers who trim trees on public property be paid the prevailing wage. The amendment would establish a way of possibly dealing with the Nstar problem in Arlington and other municipalities. The meeting adjourned before discussion of this proposal.

Committee members were asked to review the website on WordPress and provide feedback.

Action Items

Sally Naish will contact Jean Smith and/or Jimmy Dodge to learn more about the usual tree planting process and will share the information with the Committee.

Eliza Burden and Greg Watt will draft a process for soliciting and training volunteers for tree planting.

Corinna Vanderspek will contribute information for the website on native and invasive trees.

Sally Naish will add to the website the information provided by Eliza Burden on Arlington's trees

Mary Ellen Aranow will edit the website pages relating to Tree Resources.